

ISLAM **AND COMMUNISM**

BY
HAZRAT MIRZA BASHIR AHMAD

(Rendered into English by
Prof. Qazi Muhammad Aslam M.A.)

Published by :
**AHMADIYYA MUSLIM FOREIGN MISSIONS
OFFICE, RABWAH, W. PAKISTAN.**

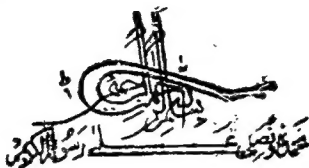
First Published 1962

PRINTED AT THE NUSRAT ART PRESS, RABWAH.

CONTENTS.

1. Three systems of the World.	...	1
2. Gog and Magog.	...	2
3. Universal Menace.	...	3
4. Communism summed up.	...	4
5. Reaction against Capitalism.	...	5
6. Right Balance.	...	6
7. The Islamic Economic System.	...	8
8. Natural incentive to Individual Effort.	...	9
9. Spirit of Healthy Rivalry.	...	10
10. Individual Sympathy and Fellow- Feeling.	...	11
11. Disregard for Mental Faculties in Communism.	...	14
12. Division of Human Rights.	...	15
13. Unnatural Props.	...	16
14. Neglect of Spiritual Side.	...	18
15. The Iron Curtain.	...	19
16. Islamic Equality.	...	20
17. Free Circulation of wealth Em- phasised.	...	21
18. Islamic Law of Inheritance.	...	23

19. Islamic Machinery For Mutual help.	...	25
20. Voluntary System of Charity in Islam.	...	27
21. Islamic system of Commerce and Trade.	...	29
22. Cure for acute Economic Crises.	...	31
23. Governmental Responsibility.	...	34
24. Summing Up.	...	35
25. World Peace.	...	36



Three Systems of the World.

Below the reader will find brief notes of comparison on the fundamental principles of Islam, Capitalism and Communism. At present these three systems are contending for supremacy in the world, two of them openly ranged against each other, the third, in the background, waiting for the outcome of the conflict between the first two. The two warring systems are Communism and Capitalism, the third is Islam, which for His Own inscrutable

reasons, God seems to be holding back to usher forth as the crisis of the first two reaches its climax.

This is in preparation for the grand religious revolution in which the Ahmadiyya Movement is destined to play the leading role for the rebirth of Islam. Its Holy Founder who has come in the spirit and power of Jesus christ and who also deputizes the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of God be on him) has been appointed a Judge for all the world religions. He is the one destined to bring about the final and lasting triumph of Islam.

Gog and Magog.

Gog and Magog are the lables applied by Islam to present-day Communism and Capitalism. The Quran has prophesied that like a great deluge [these two systems will swamp the earth in the Latter Days and that all the material resources of the earth will fall into their hands. (Chap. 21 : 9) Gog stands for the U.S.S.R., leader

and pivot of Communism; Magog for Capitalism or Western Democracy with Britain and the U.S.A. as its leaders. Radically opposed to each other, the two stand in deadly battle-array. Not in death grip physically, they are at present in secret war known as Cold War or War of Nerves. This cold war may one day become a hot war. Things are moving fast and at a dangerous speed. The half-slumbering volcano may erupt at any moment, its destructive lava sweeping over every country and all peoples.

Universal Menace.

Outwardly the two systems-Capitalism and Communism-belong to the economic cultural spheres. But their tentacles go far and deep into politics, ethics and religion. Their rise or fall involves all fields of human activity, so much so that no community or country of the world can hold itself aloof unconcerned. It is, therefore, the bounden duty of all to take stock of the present situation in order

to choose a definite programme of life and security before the impending world-wide conflagration overtakes them. He who thinks that he can stand aside and remain secure is under a dangerous delusion. He is like the ostrich that buries its head in the sand and considers itself safe.

Communism Summed up.

Communism may be summed up as follows :—

All wealth and all means of wealth must be nationalised. Individual property should become collective possession. Wealth produced under collective organisation, out of collective resources, should be distributed under collective supervision among individuals according to their needs on the basis of a so-called equitable system. All are to work according to their powers, but distribution must depend upon the needs of the individual, irrespective of the amount of his labour.

On the other hand Capitalism, also

called Democracy, admits that every person has the right to make individual effort for the production of wealth and the right to dispose of his produce the way he likes. Capitalistic theory gives free reins to individual right and allows the concentration of national wealth in a few hands. No effective measures are taken to bridge the wide gulf between the rich and the poor.

Incidentally it may be noted here that Communism is at present somewhat inclined towards a certain amount of pliancy in some of its tenets—an indication of inherent weakness in its system. The basic principles, however remain the same.

Reaction Against Capitalism.

Communism is a violent reaction to extreme Capitalism; in other words its natural offspring. For centuries world economy had been based on capitalistic lines. The wealth of nations and countries was concentrating in a few hands, the majority being unable to make both ends meet.

Indigence, want and helplessness were the concomitants of this system. In its worst form Capitalism showed itself in Russia where the Czarist regime with its corrupt court and depraved nobility had reduced the population to mere serfs who lived to minister to the satisfaction of the low desires of the upper classes of society.

A man in the street, a day-to-day labourer or a tiller in the field, was no better than a dumb driven animal. Indeed, worse. An animal has the saving grace of being insensitive. The Common man in Russia though sensitive had no means to assuage his sensitivity. Inevitably the oppressive system of Russia produced in time a violent reaction against the established regime and swung the pendulum from one extreme to the other.

Right Balance.

Contrary to the two systems, one excessively individualistic and the other excessively collectivistic, Islam chalks out a golden via media. In general it recognises

the individual's right to self-effort and its fruit, but at the same time it puts an effective curb on its extreme form. It has very wisely devised a machinery by which wealth cannot accumulate in a few hands. It has taken steps to see not only that the rich do not grow richer and richer, but that they part with some of their wealth to uplift the poor. It tries to maintain an equilibrium between the two classes.

Islam embodies the good points of the two systems contending for supremacy. At the same time it steers clear of their evils, adding its own special provisions to safeguard society from them and to contribute to general good and happiness. That is why in Islamic countries where they have made some effort to follow the injunctions of Islam neither Capitalism nor Communism has taken root in its more frightful forms, even though little of true Islam now meets the eye. Where Islam is *practised* individualism has not encroached upon common human rights nor has Collectivism

swallowed the individual. Islam presents the steel wall against both Capitalism and Communism.

The Islamic Economic System.

As a general principle Islam lays down that God has created the means of producing wealth for the good of mankind as a whole. It does not admit the monopoly of any one individual or section. The Quran says,

“Ye people who live on this earth,
God has created the earth and all
that is in it for the good of you
all.” (Chap. 2 : 30)

Thus Islam admits the claim of all to the means of producing wealth and denies the monopoly of anyone. It advocates an open-door policy for all.

At the same time Islam admits the individual's right to the fruit of his labour. Says the Quran :

“As planned in the divine law
some people gain advantage over
others in wealth.” (Chap. 16 : 72),

And again

“Don’t they see that God widens
for some their means of livelihood
and straitens the same for others.”

(Chap. 30 : 38)

Thus so far as the means of production are concerned they are open to all without distinction. But Islam also recognises and accepts the natural results of individual capacity and the right to the fruit of individual effort.

This is the natural way to maintain a right balance between two extremes.

Natural Incentive to Individual effort.

Against this, Communism, by collectivising the sources of wealth destroys personal initiative, by and large the strongest motive for one putting forth one’s best. Indeed there are other motives inducing man to work but the most pervasive and powerful motive which induces man to give his best to the work in hand undoubtedly belongs to individual initiative. No individual is without it. Indeed every

human being has that initiative planted in him by the Divine Hand so that he should not only work hard but also reap the fruit of his labour without being beholden to others. Yet Communism tries to crush it out of existence. It is true that to help others and to work for others is a noble human instinct and Islam takes due account of this side of human nature. But Islam wants to maintain the right balance between human motives. As the natural human desire to make the best of one's own efforts remains firm Islam devises a happy via media. It combines individualization and collectivisation in the best possible manner.

Spirit of Healthy Rivalry.

Communism cuts at the root of another human instinct which impels man to go ahead of others and is one of the great motive powers in individual and collective advancement. It is the desire to excel others which lends us speed and widens our activities Human mind thinks better

and deeper when moved and impelled by the desire to excel others. As a matter of fact this spirit of healthy rivalry, of excelling others known as *ambition* is one of the greatest natural motives which impel man onward and push him to activity as his heart yearns to beat others in the race of life. In Communism this spirit of excelling others is paralysed if not crushed outright.

Individual Sympathy and Fellow-Feeling.

Communism also very greatly interferes in the exercise of human sympathy and fellow-feeling. For, in Communism there is virtually no place for helping one's friends, relatives, neighbours or the poor, which is a feature of individualism. In collectivization it is the government that takes upon itself the duty of providing for others. Yet philanthropy, fellow-feeling and individual sympathy are qualities vital to man in the improvement and perfection of his morals. Human nature is quickened to its fullest when it is moved to pity,

the divine quality of mercy reflected in man which comes into play at the sight of one's relations, friends, neighbours and the poor, when one sees them around in need or trouble.

The exercise of these moral qualities depends on how far individuals are left alone in the choice of their actions. But Communism turns man into a machine while nature has made him free. God has planted love and sympathy and fellow-feeling in every human being. There should be ways open for the exercise and development of these noble qualities. Would, that the leaders of Communism had kept this side of man in view; Man is not moved by brain only; he is also moved by *heart*. As long as man's morals are not governed by reason-cum-sentiment man's nature would remain as it were, half-paralysed. True, there are dangers attendant upon individual exercise of help and sympathy. The giver is sometimes prone to make a show of obligation while the receiver is apt to develop a sense of inferiority.

Islam however guards against both. He who tries to make a show of generosity is told that, by so doing he loses all claim to merit in the sight of God and is guilty indeed of a heinous sin. Islam directs that as far as possible individual help should be rendered in a manner that the right hand should not know what the left hand does. Islam emphasizes that neither the giver nor the receiver should be actuated by baser motives.

On the one hand, it lays the greatest emphasis on work and honest living and forbids man to expose his want to others, in so far as it is humanly possible. Begg-
ing, extending one's hand, asking for help are discouraged. On the other hand, to guard against the needy having to suffer for not exposing their needs, Islam commands, the wealthy to look for the needy and the helpless and render them voluntary help without their asking for it. It enjoins upon the well-to-do to live and move in the world with eyes open so that they may see the needs of the poor, and

the helpless and help them without injuring their self-respect. In this way, Islam maintains a balance between reason and sentiment. But Communism woefully ignores this side of man.

Disregard For Mental Faculties.

It is strange that Communism, despite sacrifice of sentiment to reason, sets poor price on reason. Communism accepts man not as an embodiment of reason but a being no better than a machine worked by hands and feet. His value is based on his physical output. It is, however, a well-known truth that if a higher quality is not valued and appreciated for what it is worth, it is certain to deteriorate. Sooner or later it is sure to come down from its high pedestal to the level of the lower organs. Thus Communism tends to injure reason and intellect. The evil consequence may not be evident soon but ultimately and in the long run it is sure to affect, if not the present generation, then the next. It is a law of nature that if a

thing or quality ceases to function, it tends to disappear through disuse.

Division of Human Rights.

Communism has another great defect. In the *distribution* of human rights it does not keep in view the natural division of these rights. It has only one measure and one principle for all. But human rights are of diverse kinds. The preservation of some rights belongs to the government—the distribution of public posts and offices, the administration of justice, etc. In this sphere of rights the door to progress and prosperity should be open to all without distinction. But there are rights which a man possesses as his natural and inborn qualities and aptitudes, or which are the result of personal or individual effort. For instance, his diligence, qualities of the body, heart and brain, etc. In this sphere individual differences are bound to occur.

The natural disparity in this sphere is so manifest that no sensible person can ignore it. But Communism has treated

various human rights as identical and subjecting them to the rule of one law made a mess of the whole thing. As against this, Islam takes full account of the natural delimitation of human rights and has laid down distinct injunctions appropriate to each case. In respect of the rights which are the concern of the State, Islam enjoins strict equality and tolerates no discrimination. In respect of the rights accruing from distinctive individual potential and individual achievements, it has struck a wise middle course, and does not level the inequalities with use of force. *For who can ignore mental and physical differences? Who can blot out inequalities in effort?*

Unnatural Props.

Communism and Capitalism both suffer from one great defect. Both seek to take man out of his field of effort and make him rely on external props, reducing him to a slothful being. Capitalism accumulates wealth and makes the wealthy idle, while Communism makes people dependent upon

Governments and makes them lose their capacity to initiate and invent. But Islam maintains man in activity. It wants him to keep working and struggling. Islam also does bring in external aids; yet it does so only to the extent that man does not give up self-effort; and that is the natural way. It keeps alive in man the desire to work and support himself. This helps to keep his mind active and alert.

In case of emergency, however, external aids are not lost sight of. But it is imperative that individuals should not be reduced to a state of total dependence upon Government. On the other hand if they rely on hoarded wealth, they lose their power of self-reliance. once they cease to strive for their living and for progress, an atrophy of their natural powers is sure to set in. Rich or poor, man must keep on working for the necessities of life and try to pave his own way. Thus alone can he maintain a healthy outlook and keep from falling into idleness.

Neglect of Spiritual Side.

Religious minded people whether Muslims, Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs or followers of any other religion, must also bear in mind that the whole living, and being of Communism is materialistic. It is entirely swayed by materialistic philosophy and in practice too its whole stress is laid on the physical side of man. It ignores the spiritual side altogether. It is indeed out to destroy spirituality by every means. It may openly deny belief in God or it may not, it may declare its disbelief or say nothing on it, but the hard fact remains that its one purpose is to cut at the root of the spiritual side of man. Its expression has taken the form of atheism. It has destroyed the better part of man. The future offspring of these virtual atheists are sure to be rank dis-believers in God. It would indeed be hard to expect any seeker after God among them. No wonder its leaders are active crusaders in the spread of atheism.

The Iron Curtain.

Strict secrecy is another characteristic of Communism. The iron curtain of Russia is well-known. If Communism is a useful thing and a blessing why this secrecy? Why are foreign observers generally cut out of Russia? Why do Communists pursue a policy of secret penetration in foreign lands? The history of the world is witness to the fact that no truth was ever taught in secret, From our progenitor, Adam, to the greatest of Prophets, the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace be on him) and indeed all Prophets and reformers who have appeared in various parts of the world at various times, have proclaimed the truth they had with beat of drum and have never made any reservations or resorted to a policy of secrecy. Indeed one must seriously consider why Communism maintains such secrecy; Why is not Communism placed in the open market, Why is peaceful propagation of non-Communist ideas banned in Soviet Russia? This is certainly worth serious thought.

Islamic Equality

Now let us take up the Islamic point of view. As I have already stated Islam teaches that this earth with all its resources and natural wealth is for the good and benefit of *all men*. Islam does not recognise the monopoly of any particular class or people to it. At the same time it does not ignore differences of wealth which are due to differences of personal effort and intelligence. It is not equality of distribution that is involved. For that is impossible. It is equality of opportunity that all races or classes or individuals are entitled to. But a more important aspect of the equality of man is not what relates to the distribution of wealth but what relates to the status and position of different races of man. It is this aspect of the question that deserves consideration. For, it is here that the social gulf is created and rival camps come into existence. It was in view of this that the Holy Founder of Islam said :

“Hearken ye people! your Lord
is one and you progenitor was also

one. Aye hearken to me O ye people ! An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor has a non-Arab any superiority over an Arab; nor do the white have any preference over the dark ; nor have the dark any preference over the white, excepting of course, what an individual can acquire by his personal qualities or morals, intelligence, and self-effort.” (Musnad Ahmad)

This principle is at the root of the Islamic conception of equality which has placed all peoples, all nations, and all races on the same level. At the same time Islam recognises and promotes the inborn individual desire to excel others. Each individual or people is free to excel others by effort.

Free Circulation of Wealth Emphasised.

A question may here arise that if in spite of the fact that earthly resources are for the benefit of all without distinction how does Islam propose to smooth down inequalities that inevitably come into being owing to the natural disparity in the effort

and intelligence of individuals and the consequent accumulation of wealth in a few hands? That is a valid question. And Islam has an answer. The Quran says :-

“Those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way prescribed by Allah, give to them the tidings of a painful punishment. They should remember the day when this hoarding shall be made hot in the fire of Hell, and their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded therewith, and it shall be said unto them: “This is what you hoarded for yourselves ; so taste ye now what you used to hoard up.”

(Chap. 9 : 34, 35.)

With such golden teaching Islam exhorts the well-to-do to bring out their surplus wealth into the open market and thus help to support the poor and the needy directly through Charity and indirectly through investment of their capital in trade and industry. If a person invests his

accumulated wealth in commerce and industry he certainly benefits others. Islam warns the hoarders of wealth that if they store up their wealth, they would be creating trouble for themselves not only in the life to come but in this very life. This is amply borne out by the insecurity born of racial and class rivalry. The gruelling competition between capital and labour, trade unions and business magnates, is an open secret. It is this cut-throat struggle between the capitalist and the common man, the master and the slave, the landlords and the tenants which embitters the lives of all and destroys the peace of mankind at large.

Islamic Law of Inheritance.

But Islam does not content itself with laying down general principles only. It devises machinery for a fair and equitable distribution of wealth. To keep this machinery in gear it lays down definite instructions. For instance, it lays down that on the death of a property-holder

the property must be fairly divided among the near relations. This law of inheritance is very wisely conceived. It does not recognise primogeniture. It recognises the claim of all descendants, the kith and kin. According to a well defined proportion the whole property is divided among the children of the deceased, male and female, his parents, and, in some cases, his brothers, sisters and other relatives as well. Islam thus creates hurdles in the way of accumulation of wealth. At the passing of each generation a new hurdle is placed to reduce the disparity which may have arisen in the mean time.

It is not merely the division of heritage that is here aimed at. A fair and equitable distribution of national wealth is also one of the objects. As a corollary to this law of inheritance, Islam also devises and enforces what may be called the *law of testament*, according to which every Muslim can will away one-third of his property for the non-kindred inheritors. For instance, if one holds property worth three lacs, he can

set aside 1/3 of it, i.e. one lac, for those who are not within the circle of legal inheritors, or for charitable institutions, or other similar purposes. This supplementary arrangement provides means for disposing of accumulated wealth among the general public. Righteous Muslims leave instructions to this effect.

Islamic Machinery for Mutual Help

There is another Islamic law which not only advocates the co-operative basis of society but also arranges practically to disperse and spread accumulated wealth for the general good. This law is two-phased, obligatory, and voluntary. The obligatory side of this law is what we call the law of *Zakat* by which an Islamic government can collect a goodly sum of money ranging from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 20% of the wealth of the rich to be spent on the poor, the needy, people in straitened circumstances and for public good. It should be borne in mind that this tax is not collected from the rich only but from

every one who has more than his minimum requirements. The idea is to uplift those who are needy and helpless and thus reduce disparities. The words used by the Holy Founder of Islam in this connection explain the purpose of this obligatory tax. "The object of the institution of Zakat" he said, "is to take from the better off to *return* the same to the poor and the needy" (Bukhari). The words "*to return*" are very wisely chosen and deserve particular notice. The expression is meant to imply that this tax is not an act of grace on the part of the rich to the poor. It is obligatory. The rich should not think they are doing any favour to the poor.

The idea is that they should think it an act of duty and the poor should accept it as a matter of right. The Creator of Man wants it to be known that the wealth of the rich is mainly due to the industry of the poor. The poor, therefore, have a rightful claim upon the wealth of the rich. That this is to be so is self-evident. For, in the first place, everything belongs to

God, the Lord and Master of all. As His creatures, all have a basic claim to everything. Secondly, the production of wealth is mainly due to the labour and industry of the poor. The word *Zakat* signifies purification and augmentation. This is because the tax releases the giver from the obligation he owes to those who have been instrumental in the production of wealth, and because this adds to and augments the resources of those who receive it.

Voluntary System of Charity in Islam.

As we have stated there is also such a thing as voluntary taxation. This is summed up in the general term 'charity'. It includes all kinds of alms-giving that are not obligatory. By instituting this charitable organisation Islam has not only helped the poor and the needy but it has also promoted general philanthropy which means mutual love, sympathy, and fellow-feeling. Islam is keen to keep alive this side of human nature and has consequently laid great

stress upon it. The Holy Prophet of Islam counts it as one of the greatest virtues, an extremely meritorious act in the sight of God. The Holy Prophet himself was most open-handed in the distribution of alms. It is said that in this respect his hand moved with the swiftness of a strong gale disdaining all obstacles. He would advise his followers to distribute personal and individual charity in a way that the right hand did not know what the left hand gave; so that both the giver and the receiver be saved from feelings of inferiority or superiority.

This indirect way of helping the poor and the needy is by way of voluntary contributions as opposed to government collection of Zakat, which is obligatory. The idea is that not only should the rich and well-to-do part with a goodly portion of what they have earned with the help of the poor but should also be inspired and actuated by the ideas of fellow-feeling, love, and sympathy. Therefore, while Communism turns men into machines and

kills the noble qualities which should characterize them Islam engenders and promotes those qualities in the best possible manner.

Islamic System of Commerce and Trade.

Again, the Islamic law relating to business and commerce, etc., also acts as a brake on undue hoarding. By banning usury or interest Islam has destroyed a great instrument of upsetting economic balance. For it is this taking and giving of interest that destroys the equilibrium between man and man. In the first place the idea that a man can borrow money as he likes at a certain rate of interest encourages him to undertake enterprises beyond his power. It also tends to make people's money flow into a few hands.

The institution of interest turns capital into a dreadful monster. Stop this dealing in interest and you will find trades and businesses slipping out of the hands of the few owners of capital. Trade and

commerce will, then, change into co-operative systems of commerce and industry which help in diluting and dissipating great hoardings. The general wealth of the country will either pass into the hands of the government or become fairly distributed in the whole community. It is obvious that co-operative enterprises or government ownership in *certain* well-defined sectors promotes political as well as national interests and is in no way harmful to them.

The prohibition of interest and usury also prevents the rich from exploiting the poor. For, then, they can no longer suck the blood of the labouring class. To say that present-day business cannot be run without the institution of interest is an illusion bred by present West-ridden conceptions. It is the outcome of Western capitalistic institutions which have become accepted (in some cases blindly) all over the world. But they can gradually be dispensed with. After all, before the rise of the West, trade and commerce were carried on in greater part of the world

without this capitalistic device of exploiting the poor. We hope to God that when interest is abolished trade and business will flourish in a better way than before. Instead of the present system Islam prefers business on the basis of debt-of-honour or debt based on mortgage or through a system of co-operation. Business in these forms keeps commerce and trade open without disturbing the general equilibrium and without offending or crushing the noble instincts which lend dignity to man.

To the prohibition of interest Islam adds the prohibition of gambling. In gambling the individual, rather than rely on effort and skill, depends upon chance, which not only destroys morals but creates an undue disparity of wealth without even the use of any kind of effort and skill so as to make one person lose his life's earnings in a few seconds and make another person rich in the same manner.

Cure for Acute Economic Crises.

The above-stated measures apply when

or where there are no extraordinary circumstances facing the people of a country. But if an emergency arises and an unusual situation is created by war or famine affecting food and other means of subsistence, then Islam proposes extraordinary remedies for such situations. If, for instance, as a result of such extraordinary circumstances a part of the country or of people run the risk of death from starvation owing to shortage of food, Islam ordains that all resources must be pooled together and rationing resorted to, so that none should suffer needlessly. There is a well-known *hadith* which reports a companion of the Holy Prophet saying :- “We started on an expedition with the Holy Prophet but it so happened that our food stocks ran short and the people were in great distress. We, therefore, made up our minds to slaughter a few of the riding camels to meet the situation. At this the Holy Prophet ordered us to pool together our meagre stocks of food; then out of this pooled stock he rationed us

all till we were able to tide over the crisis". (Muslim)

There is another tradition which reports the Holy Prophet saying :- "The tribe of 'Ash'ar have a very praiseworthy custom among them. Whenever during a journey or even at home they run short of food they resort to the pooling of individual resources and then out of this common stock they divide among themselves with common measure. *I am of them and they are of me*". (Bukhari). It is clear from this that though Islam does admit an individual's claim to what the individual has earned, it keeps collective welfare steadily in view. It looks after the needs of the poor and under extraordinary circumstances it even enjoins collectivisation so that in times of emergency people may not suffer unduly. This indeed is the happy mean at which Islam aims, and which alone can promote and preserve peace in society.

Governmental Responsibility.

Lastly, there always are people that Government or society must look after. They are the ailing, the crippled, and the disabled who, owing to some natural or acquired defect may not be able to earn their living. Or, what they earn may not be sufficient for their legitimate needs. Or, there may be unemployed persons whose unemployment may not be due to idleness on their part or to shirking of work. It is such people, according to Islam, that Government or society must provide for their minimum requirements including water, food, clothing, house, and primary education*. This is further clarified by the Holy Quran where it says that the provision of food or other basic needs is the ultimate responsibility of God. Hence a worldly government which claims to imitate divine government is bound to look after the needs of the incapacitated who cannot, inspite of a will to work and inspite

*The Holy Quran 20 : 122, 123.

The Quranic word ta'ra as used in this verse, lit, "be naked" signifies both the nakedness of the body and of the brain i. e. illiteracy.

of due effort, make both ends meet.

Summing Up.

To sum up, Communism weakens :
(a) a Individual effort and destroys natural incentives to work ; (b) It kills feelings of human sympathy and fellow-feelings ; (c) It puts no value upon brain work and thus lets it decline ; (d) It ties down man's economic condition to unnatural external props ; (e) It deals a death-blow to spirituality and sows the seed of atheism and materialism.

In sharp contrast to this, Islam adopts : (a) via media between Communism and Capitalism, combining the good points and discarding the abuses of both ; (b) It admits the right of an individual to what he has earned by his effort and at the same time devises a machinery for a fair distribution of national wealth ; (c) It leaves an open door to everyone to make use of the natural resources of wealth ; (d) It keeps alive and strengthens sentiments of love, sympathy and fellow-feeling, (e) It keeps

in view the spiritual relationship between the Creator and the created.

World Peace.

Thus, against the extremes of Communism and Capitalism Islam is the via-media, the happy means to promote the human ideals of brotherhood, progress, culture, and civilization. And we hope to God that the future of the world will be based upon Islamic principles which are sure to reassert themselves with the coming renaissance of Islam, that has already been ushered in with the appearance of the Promised Reformer of the latter days. How beautifully does the Quran say :

“O Ye Muslims We have made you a moderate people avoiding extremes. It is your duty to guide others to the right path, for they have strayed from the path of truth and rectitude. You are the divinely witnesses for the path of righteousness.” (2 : 144)

Time is not far distant when the via-

media of Islam will become a highway for nations to follow; when the path chalked out by our Lord and Master (blessings of Allah be on him) will lay the foundations of world peace by setting at rest individual fears on the one hand and removing national jealousies and prejudices on the other.

And our last words are that true praise is for Allah, the Creator and Master of the Universe.
